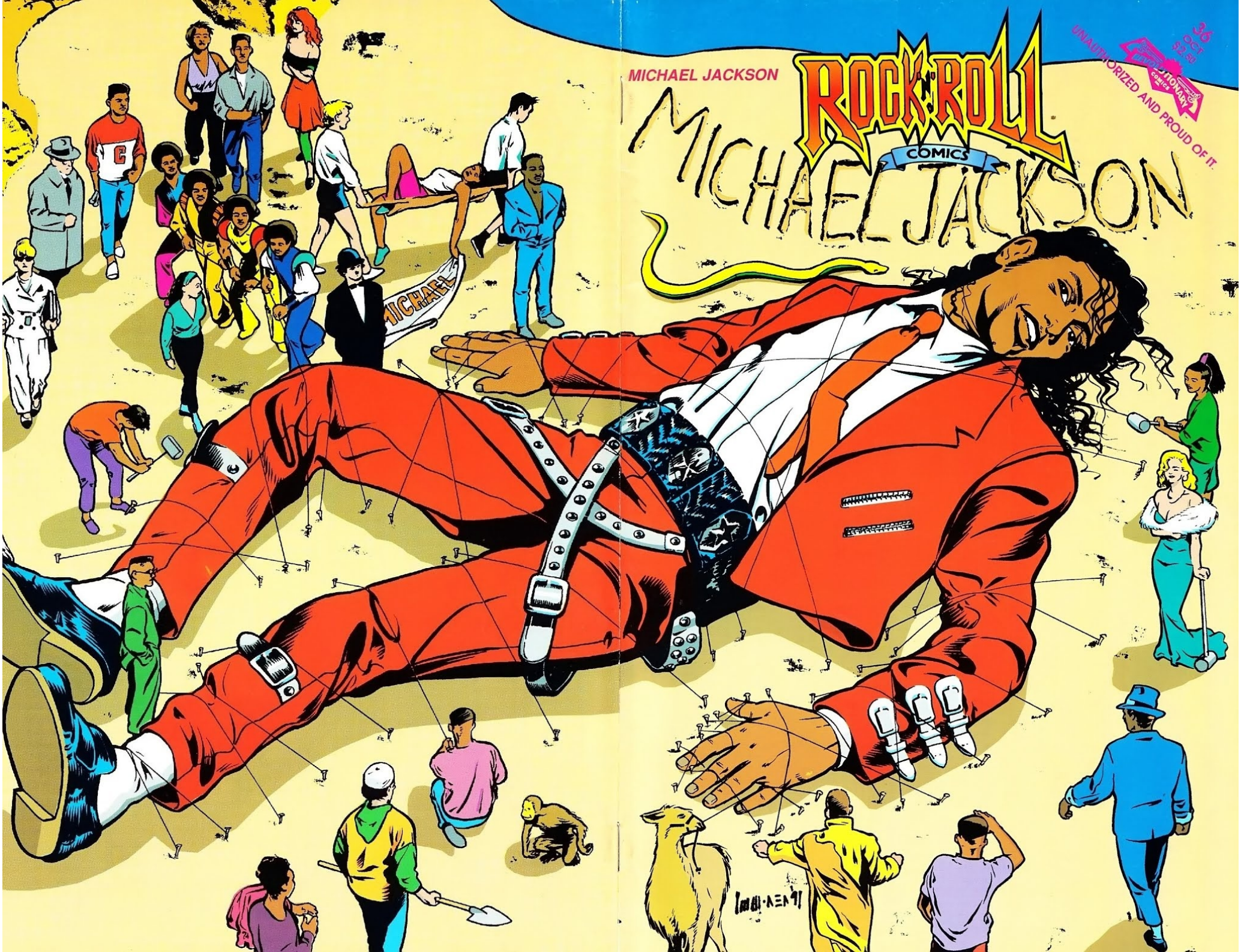
MICHAEL JACKSON
ROCK·N·ROLL
COMICS
MICHAEL JACKSON
UNAUTHORIZED AND PROUD OF IT
36
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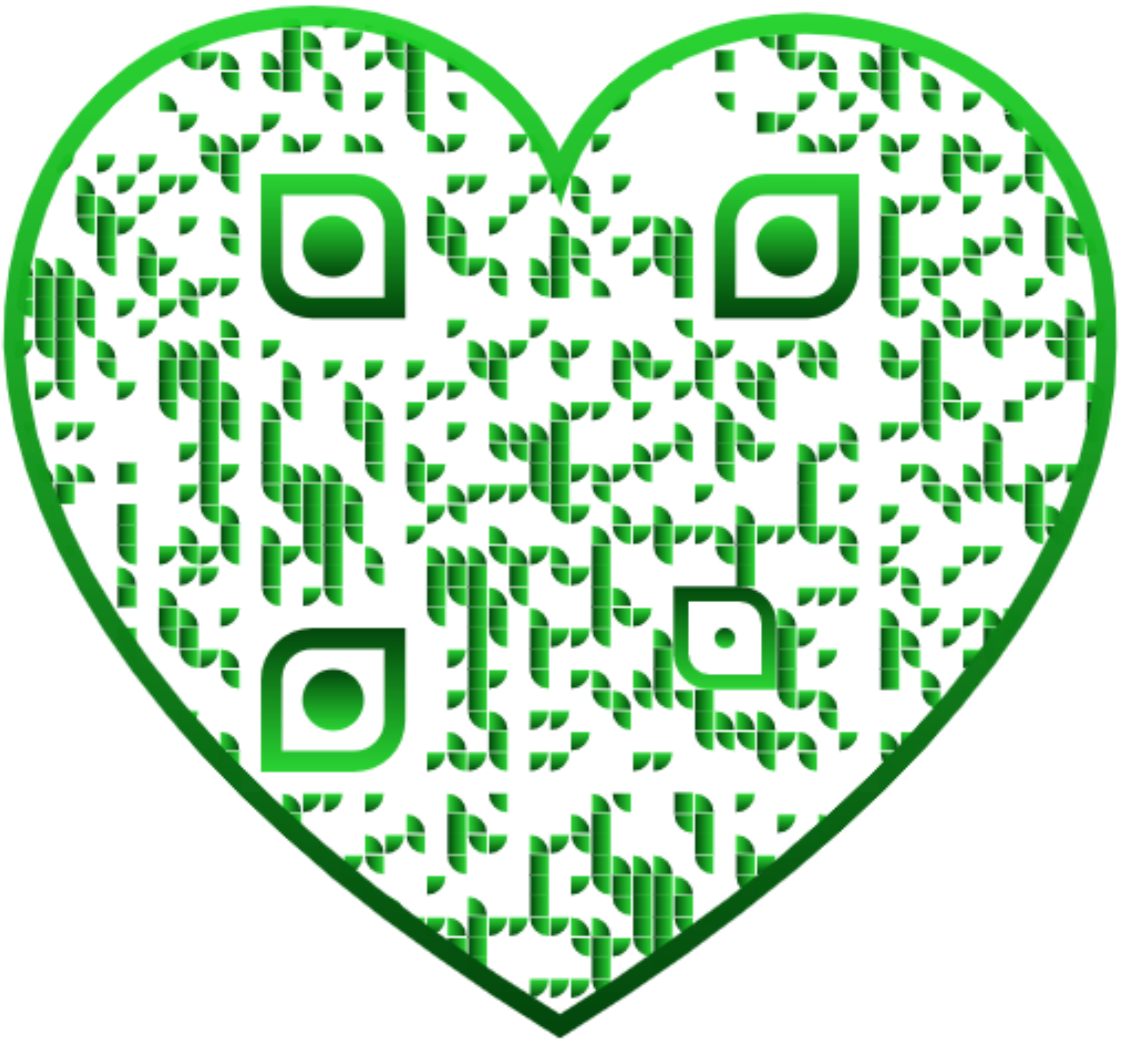
MICHAEL



★★★ REVOLUTIONARY COMMENTS ★★★

3841 Fourth Ave., Suite 229 ❐ San Diego, CA 92103

By Todd Loren

Jay Allen Sanford has been writing Rock N' Roll Comics since issue 22. This has made it possible for me to devote more time to this column, and my bi-monthly Beatles Experience scripts, and to the growing responsibilites of running Revolutionary Comics, which includes reading ALL of the letters we get from our readers. (And responding to most of them!). Anyway, Jay Allen wanted some space to say a few words this time around, so take it away, Jay Allen!

A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR by Jay Allen Sanford

What you hold in your hands is an attempt to bring to life the storybook tale of the world's most talented performer. I offer this as an arguable opinion, but no matter what you think of his music, his dancing, his acting, his ground-breaking videos or his ever-evolving, otherworldly appearance, it would be impossible to dismiss the pure perfection and seemingly effortless expenditure he's put into every creative genre he's touched.

In researching this issue, I plowed through a veritable mountain of negative and hurtful press, most of it disdainful of his post-*Thriller* terminal overexposure. I mean, the guy even allowed his likeness to be used to sell underwear and lunchboxes, so *some* of the critics raise valid points. But this is not Mickey Mouse we're talking about here.

This is a flesh and blood, feeling, and (by virtue of his immense fame) very lonely human being. His management, in search of a short-term windfall, obviously ignored the long-term goodwill of the record buying public by *forcefeeding* Michael to us during the eighties. Hence the lackluster sales of the long-awaited *Thriller* followup record, *Bad*. (Though *that* album's track record would've constituted an enormous hit for any *other* recording artist).

I tried to ignore the sensationalistic "freak show" references, and stuck mainly to facts gleaned from his (admittedly fluffy) autobiography *Moonwalk* and other reputable, confirmable sources. However, the odd, fairytale and circus-like atmosphere of his life still dogged my attempts to be as encyclopedic and non-judgmental as possible. This comic is the mixed result.

A fantasy-come-true. A story too unreal to be imagined. A life which has truly been, so far, stranger than fiction. A little sad, a little funny, a little inspiring and often very poignant, it is a modern day Peter Pan tale. His magic shield may have become somewhat tarnished by crass commercialism over the past few years, but MJ's music and motion has brough more joy, smiles, and foot-tapping to the world than perhaps anyone else alive. Ladies and gentlemen, I give you... *MICHAEL JACKSON!*

TIME WARNER REFUSES TO ANSWER TO FIRST AMENDMENT INQUIRIES

In issue 33, I told you about Mr. Peter Haje at Time Warner Inc. He's the man who is in charge of making sure that Time Warner acts morally and with the best interests of the United States Constitution in mind. To make sure they don't abuse the public trust, as a huge conglomerate communications corporation might be prone to do. To review, here's what happened...

1. I sent a letter to all major comic book publishers in America asking them to confirm that they believe they have First Amendment rights.
2. None responded, which I reported in this column.
3. A reader, James Nelson, wrote to DC Comics (owned by Time Warner) to ask why.
4. DC vice president Paul Levitz responded to him by saying that Time Warner always supported the First Amendment.
5. I called Mr. Levitz to find out if he was aware that a licensor of Time Warner, Great Southern, was preventing us from publishing comics about groups on the Atlantic label, which is also owned by Time Warner.
6. Mr. Levitz passed the buck to Mr. Haje.
7. I called Mr. Haje and spoke to him on June 19th. He requested that I send him copies of the comic books in question which I did.
8. About a week later, I called back. He was in a meeting and did not return the call.
9. On July 22, 1991, I called again. He was still in a meeting, and did not return my call.

As of this writing I still have not heard from Mr. Haje on this issue. So what's the deal? Simple. This corporation has gotten so big that no one is willing to say anything about anything for fear that they'll get fired. This corporation has billlions in debts, and mass firings are probably just around the corner, so everyone is passing the buck and watching their ass. But I'm not going to let them! I recorded the conversation which I had with Mr. Haje on June 19th. Here's what was said:

THE CONVERSATION

Todd Loren: Mr Haje?

Peter Haje: Mmm hmm.

TL: I've been trying to get ahold of you for some time. Between the two of us we finally managed to do it. I've got a situation

(Please see page 31)

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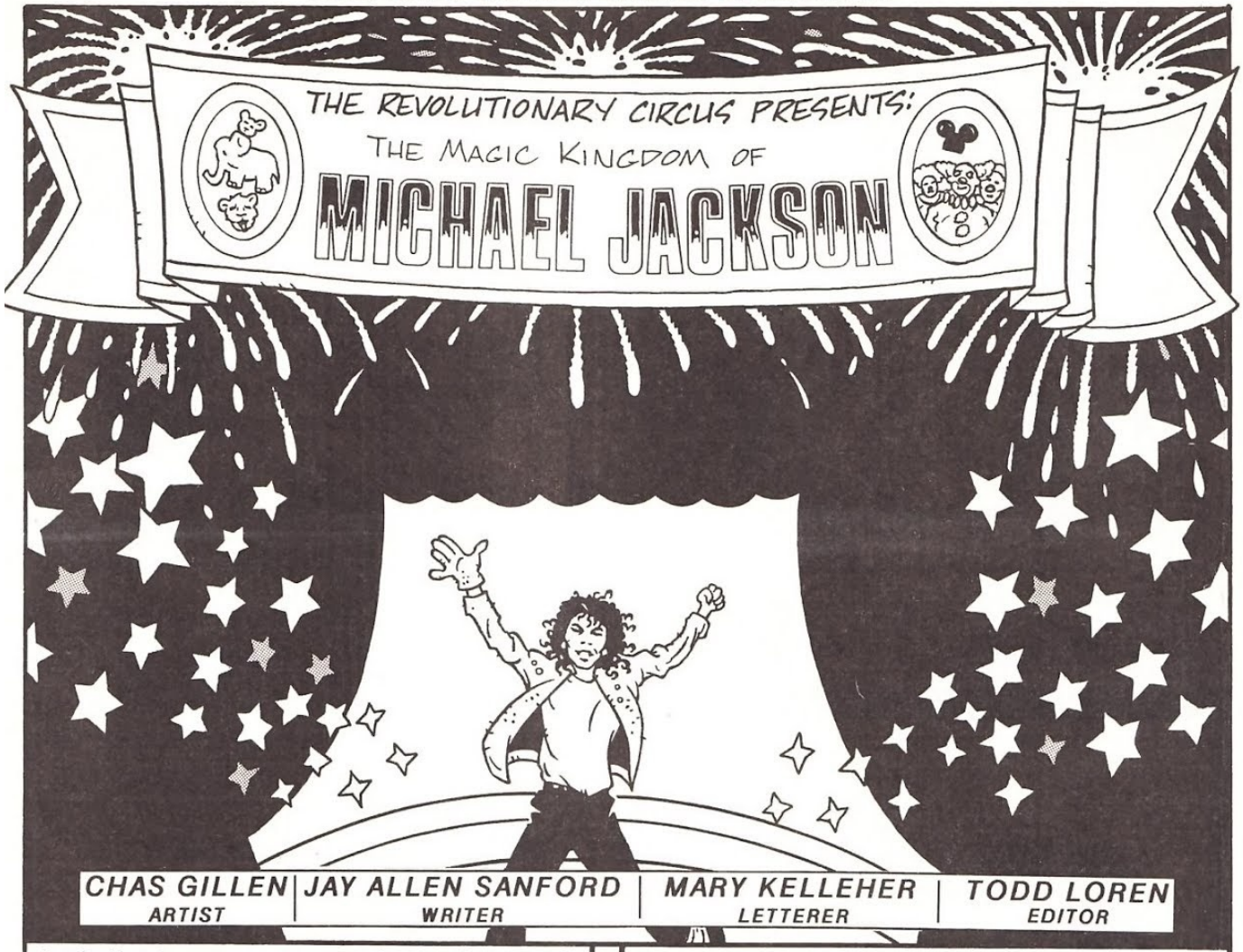


OUR MAGICAL MYSTERY TOUR BEGINS IN GARY, INDIANA, IN 1963, WHERE THREE OF THE JACKSON BROTHERS (JACKIE-12, TITO-10, JERMAINE-9) WITH TWO OF THEIR COUSINS, FORM A SINGING GROUP. YOUNGER SIBLING MICHAEL (6) SHOWS THEM ALL UP, HOWEVER, DURING A FIRST GRADE TALENT SHOW.

♪ CLIMB EVERY ♪ MOUNTAIN, FORD EVERY STREAM...

PAPA JOE JACKSON, A CRANE OPERATOR AND EX-GUITARIST WITH ***THE FALCONS***, SEES UNLIMITED POTENTIAL IN HIS BOYS, ESPECIALLY YOUNG MICHAEL.

DIDJA SEE THE TEACHERS CHEERIN' AND CRYIN'?! I REALLY MADE THEM ***HAPPY***!

JUST KEEP PRACTICIN', BOY, WE'RE... I MEAN ***YOU'RE*** GONNA BE RICH AND FAMOUS SOMEDAY!

BY 1964, MICHAEL AND MARLON (7) JOIN THE FAMILY GROUP, AND THEY CALL THEMSELVES ***THE JACKSON FIVE***. THE BOYS EAT, BREATHE AND LIVE MUSIC AND DANCING, ESPECIALLY MICHAEL.

THAT'S "MICKEY'S MONKEY" BY SMOKEY ROBINSON AND THE MIRACLES. A ***GREAT*** SONG!

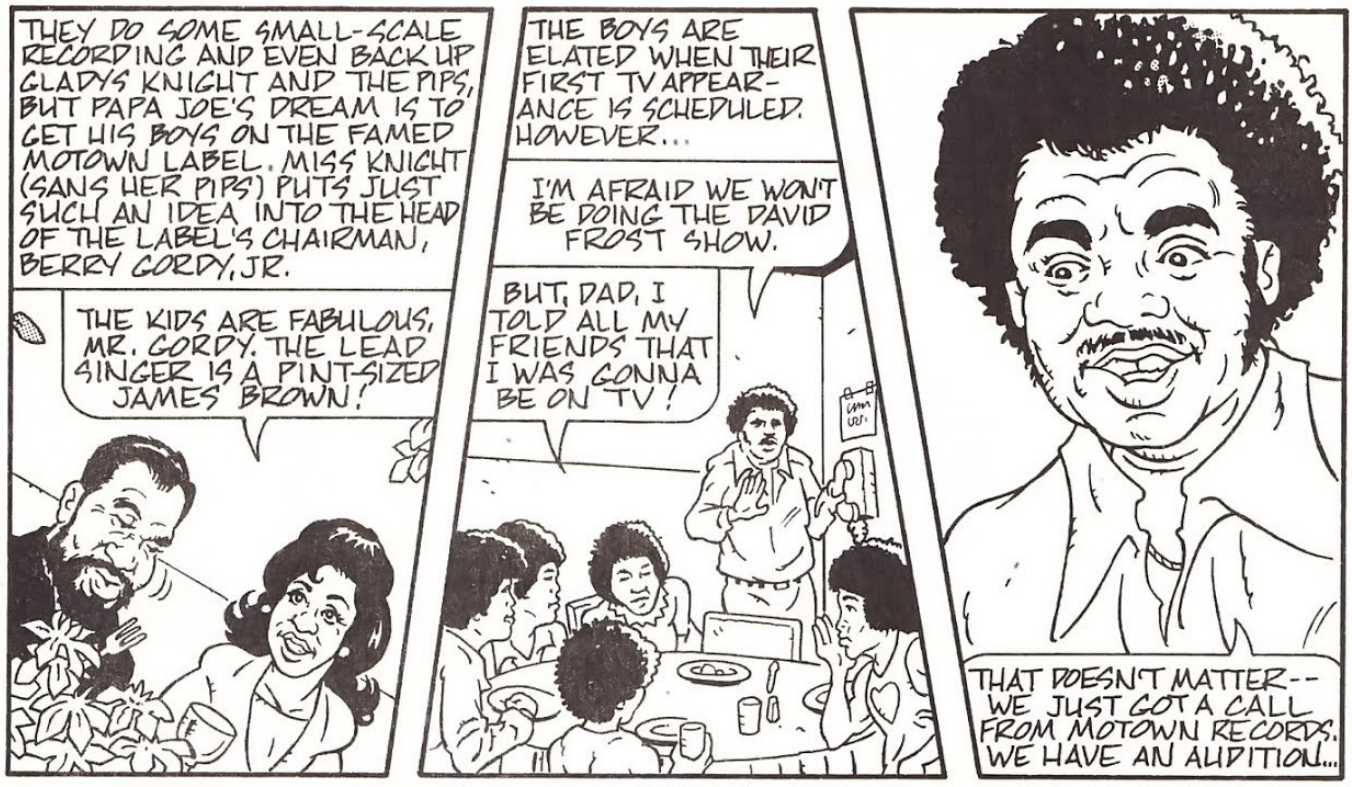
I'LL TAKE IT. AND DO YOU HAVE THE TEMPTATIONS' "MY GIRL"? ME AND MY BROTHERS ARE GONNA DO IT IN A TALENT CONTEST AT ROOSEVELT HIGH.

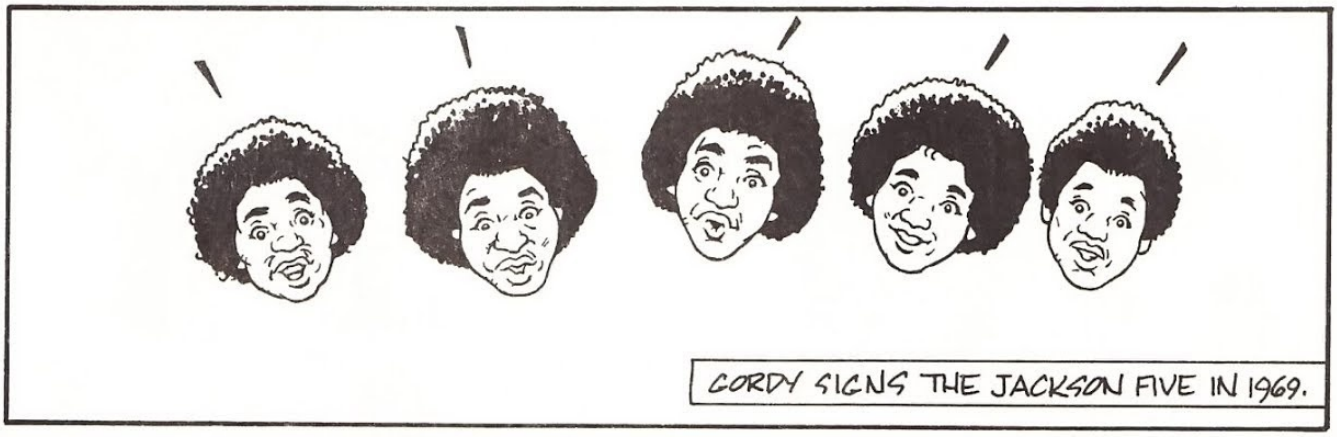
THEY WIN THAT CONTEST AS WELL AS A 1966 ONE AT HARLEM'S FAMOUS ***APOLLO THEATER***. DAD NOW MANAGES THE GROUP, AS THEY PLAY THEATERS, CARNIVALS AND STRIP CLUBS (!?) THROUGHOUT THE EAST.

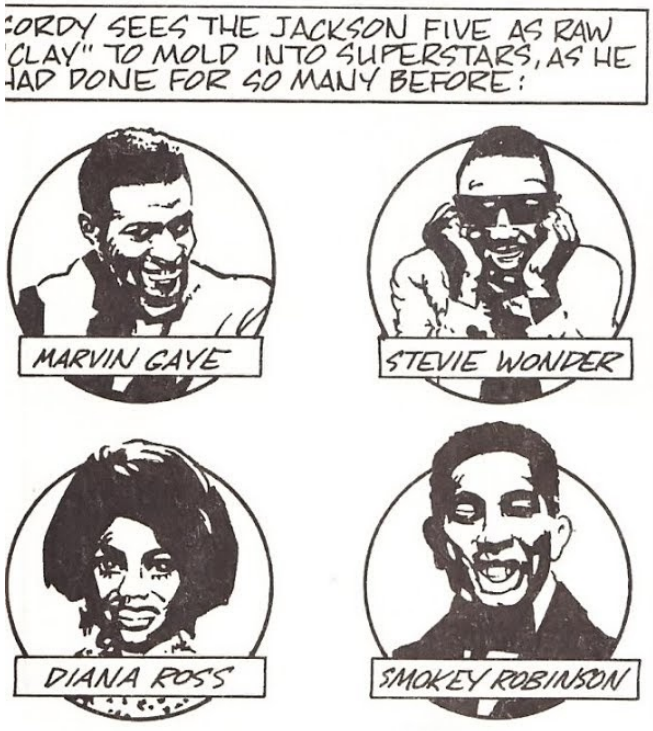
MAN, DAD IS STRICT! HE WAS SO MAD WHEN I DRILLED THE HOLE IN THE WALL TO WATCH THE STRIPPERS CHANGE!

YOU'RE NOT KIDDIN, TITO. I GOT SMACKED JUST FOR BEING LATE TO REHEARSAL!

THAT'S NOTHIN', JERMAINE. I GOT WHIPPED FOR BEING ON THE PHONE FOR MORE'N FIVE MINUTES! DAD SAID, "MIKE, IF A RECORD COMPANY CALLS AND THE LINE'S BUSY, THEY'LL NEVER CALL BACK!"


THEY DO SOME SMALL-SCALE RECORDING AND EVEN BACK UP GLADYS KNIGHT AND THE PIPS, BUT PAPA JOE'S DREAM IS TO GET HIS BOYS ON THE FAMED MOTOWN LABEL. MISS KNIGHT (SANS HER PIPS) PUTS JUST SUCH AN IDEA INTO THE HEAD OF THE LABEL'S CHAIRMAN, BERRY GORDY, JR.
THE KIDS ARE FABULOUS, MR. GORDY. THE LEAD SINGER IS A PINT-SIZED JAMES BROWN!
THE BOYS ARE ELATED WHEN THEIR FIRST TV APPEARANCE IS SCHEDULED. HOWEVER...
I'M AFRAID WE WON'T BE DOING THE DAVID FROST SHOW.
BUT, DAD, I TOLD ALL MY FRIENDS THAT I WAS GONNA BE ON TV!
THAT DOESN'T MATTER-- WE JUST GOT A CALL FROM MOTOWN RECORDS. WE HAVE AN AUDITION...


GORDY SIGNS THE JACKSON FIVE IN 1969.


GORDY SEES THE JACKSON FIVE AS RAW "CLAY" TO MOLD INTO SUPERSTARS, AS HE HAD DONE FOR SO MANY BEFORE:
MARVIN GAYE
STEVIE WONDER
DIANA ROSS
SMOKEY ROBINSON

MR. GORDY WANTS TO CALL YOUR FIRST ALBUM, "DIANA ROSS PRESENTS THE JACKSON FIVE," I TOLD HIM I'D BE HONORED! YOU BOYS ARE SPELLBINDING!
GULP! UH, WOW, UH... I MEAN, I...I ...THANK YOU, MISS ROSS!!
3

IN JANUARY 1970, MOTOWN RELEASES THE FIRST JACKSON FIVE SINGLE.

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! "I WANT YOU BACK" ON A 45, AND I'M SINGIN' LEAD!

IN FEBRUARY, THE LP IS OUT, AND IT QUICKLY CLIMBS TO #5! THE SECOND SINGLE, "ABC" (RELEASED IN APRIL) KNOCKS THE BEATLES' "LET IT BE" FROM THE NUMBER ONE SPOT... AND IT WINS A GRAMMY.

BOYS, I'M SO PROUD OF YOU! MR. GORDY SAYS WE'LL HAVE SOLD TEN MILLION RECORDS BY SEPTEMBER!*

*SEE THE JACKSON FIVE MINI-BIO IN ROCK N' ROLL COMICS MAGAZINE 2 FOR MORE ON GORDY. -MOTOR CITY TODD

NOW THAT "THE LOVE YOU SAVE" IS AT #1, WE'VE HAD THREE HUGE HITS OFF THE FIRST ALBUM!

BUT YOU SHOULDN'T JUST COAST AND TAKE IT EASY. YOUR MOM AND I WANT THIS ACT TO KEEP GETTING BIGGER!

YOU'LL HAVE TO HUSTLE, REHEARSE MORE THAN EVER! PLUS THERE'LL BE TOURS, PHOTO SESSIONS, INTERVIEWS, TUTORING...

LOOK AT THOSE KIDS. I CAN'T IMAGINE SUCH FREEDOM, SUCH A CARE-FREE LIFE. I WISH I COULD WALK AWAY AND BE LIKE THEM! BUT, I'M ALMOST TWELVE AND SHOW BUSINESS IS THE ONLY LIFE I KNOW, AS FAR BACK AS I CAN REMEMBER.

IN SEPTEMBER 1971, ABC PREMIERES THE JACKSON FIVE CARTOON.

THIS IS ***PERFECT***! NOW I'M A CARTOON CHARACTER!

I JUST WISH ***REAL*** LIFE WAS THAT PERFECT! I HAD TWO ***PIMPLES*** THIS MORNING!

IN '72, MICHAEL BEGINS A SERIES OF SOLO RECORDS. "*BEN*" (A LOVE SONG ABOUT THE KILLER RAT WHO STARS IN THE FILM SEQUEL TO "*WILLARD*") SCALES TO #1, AND HIS SINGLES WITH THE JACKSON FIVE CONTINUE TO DOMINATE THE TOP OF THE CHARTS.

THE GROUP BECOMES A STAPLE ON ED SULLIVAN'S VARIETY TV SHOW.

MICHAEL JACKSON'S SOLO HITS

JACKSON FIVE HITS

JUST REMEMBER WHERE YOUR INCREDIBLE TALENT CAME FROM: IT'S A GIFT FROM ***GOD***!

I'LL REMEMBER THAT, SIR, AND I PROMISE TO SHARE IT WITH THE WORLD!

THE WORLD SHOWS INDIFFERENCE TO HIS NEWEST SOLO LP. IN MAY '73, "*MUSIC AND ME*" BARELY SCRATCHES THE TOP 100.

DIANA ROSS

:SNIFF: I FEEL AWFUL! LIKE I LET MY FOLKS AND MR. GORDY DOWN! AT LEAST MISS ROSS STILL BELIEVES IN ME!

DIANA ROSS

WHEN SHE LET ME HANG OUT ON THE SET OF "*LADY SINGS THE BLUES*," SHE TOLD ME, "SOMEDAY YOU'RE GONNA BE THE BIGGEST STAR ON EARTH." I WONDER...

IN DECEMBER 1973, JERMAINE JACKSON MARRIES THEIR LABEL BOSS' DAUGHTER, HAZEL GORDY, FOLLOWING MOTOWN'S MOVE TO LOS ANGELES.
Y'KNOW, MIKE, THIS MEANS WE'RE MARRIED NOW, TOO! TO MOTOWN RECORDS!
I SEE WHAT YOU MEAN, TITO. MR. GORDY IS FAMILY NOW!
LATER...
I RESPECT MR. GORDY MORE THAN ANYTHING, BUT SOME THINGS STILL BUG ME.
UH HUH, WE'RE STILL NOT ALLOWED TO WRITE & PRODUCE OUR OWN SONGS!
OUR TALENT PAYS THE BILLS! WE SHOULD DEMAND MORE RIGHTS, OR AT LEAST MORE THAN THIS PITIFUL 2.7% ROYALTY RATE!
BUT, GUYS, HE'S MY FATHER-IN-LAW!
NO, TITO'S RIGHT. THEY REALLY DO WORK FOR US! I THINK I'LL ASK MR. GORDY TO GIVE US MORE CREATIVE CONTROL!
GOOD LUCK, MICHAEL!
...SO THAT'S THE WAY WE FEEL, MR. GORDY, SIR.
THIS LABEL BUILT THE JACKSON FIVE! THERE'S NOTHING YOU'VE DONE, NOTHING YOU OWN, THAT DIDN'T COME FROM US!

THE ENSUING RIFT IS UNAVOIDABLE. IN MARCH 1975, MJ'S NEWEST SOLO ALBUM IS OUT (HIS LAST ONE FOR OVER FOUR YEARS).

BILL

THEY NEVER EVEN PROMOTED MY RECORD "FOREVER MICHAEL." IT ONLY CHARTED AT #101. IT'S LIKE THEY WANT TO ***PUNISH*** ME!*

*THIS WAS A COMMON COMPLAINT BY MANY MOTOWN ARTISTS WHO SUBSEQUENTLY LEFT THE LABEL. -TODD

BUT I'M ALMOST 17 NOW. MY BROTHERS ARE ALL GROWN AND GETTING MARRIED, AND OUR CONTRACT WITH MOTOWN IS UP IN MAY...

SURE ENOUGH...

VARIETY

JACKSONS LEAVE MOTOWN FOR EPIC JERMAINE STAYS

GORDY SUES FOR 20 MILLION...

THE LAWSUIT ISN'T SETTLED UNTIL 1980, WHEN THE JACKSONS* PAY A HALF-MILLION DOLLARS IN DAMAGES.

MOTOWN RECORDS

...AND OUR FIRST MOVE WILL BE TO RELEASE A SERIES OF COMPILATION ALBUMS, PUT OUT EVERYTHING WE HAVE BY THE JACKSON FIVE ***AND*** THE BRAT'S SOLO LP'S. AND THEN WE BUILD UP ***JERMAINE*** AS OUR NEW STAR...

*WITH EPIC, THEY HAD TO DROP THE "JACKSON FIVE" NAME, OWNED BY GORDY. -TODD

I ***HATE*** PERFORMING TO CANNED APPLAUSE AND LAUGHTER. I'D RATHER BE A CARTOON AGAIN!

FROM SUMMER 1976 AND, SPORADICALLY, THROUGH MARCH 1977, CBS FEATURES THE JACKSONS IN A LIVE ACTION VARIETY SHOW (WITH BROTHER RANDY REPLACING JERMAINE ON BONGOS).

IN 1977, THEIR FIRST EPIC LP IS OUT, "**THE JACKSONS**." ALSO THAT YEAR MJ IS CAST AS THE SCARECROW IN THE FILM VERSION OF THE BROADWAY HIT, "**THE WIZ**."*

*THIS FILM WAS A GORDY PRODUCTION, SO THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BERRY AND MICHAEL WAS NOT SEVERED. - TODD

THE MOVIE CO-STARS RICHARD PRYOR AS THE WIZARD AND DIANA ROSS AS A LONG-IN-THE-TOOTH DOROTHY. DURING ONE REHEARSAL, MJ MISPRONOUNCES THE NAME OF A VENERABLE PHILOSOPHER.

IS THIS LINE "SOAK-RAE-TEES"?

NAW, THAT'S "SOCRATES." SOFT "O."

THANKS. SAY, DIDN'T WE MEET AT A PARTY FOR SAMMY DAVIS, JR.?

UH HUH. I'M QUINCY JONES. I'M DOING THE SCORE.

THE FATEFUL MEETING WOULD BLOSSOM INTO A LONG AND FRUITFUL PARTNERSHIP.

IN 1978, AT A DINNER WITH QUINCY JONES...

DID YOU READ THE SCRIPT FROM THE FILM OF "A CHORUS LINE"?

YEAH, BUT I DON'T THINK I CAN TAKE THE PART THEY OFFERED ME.

WHY NOT?

THE ROLE IS OF A **GAY** MAN! ALL THE TABLOIDS ALREADY HAVE THAT MADE-UP STORY ABOUT ME AND CLIFFORD DAVIS SUPPOSEDLY BEING LOVERS! I DON'T NEED TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH HOMOSEXUALITY IN A **MOVIE**!

IT MAKES ME MAD, THOUGH. I'VE DATED TATUM O'NEIL, I JUST ABOUT FELL IN **LOVE** WITH BROOKE SHEILDS AND MISS ROSS, BUT I'VE GOTTA TAKE THESE STORIES SERIOUSLY AND TURN DOWN THE PART!

BESIDES, MY PERSONAL LIFE AIN'T NOBODY'S BUSINESS BUT MY OWN!

ON A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT SUBJECT, DO YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS ABOUT WHO MIGHT BE ABLE TO PRODUCE MY NEXT SOLO RECORD?

UH, WELL, IF THAT'S A HINT, HOW ABOUT **ME**?

THE ALBUM, "*OFF THE WALL*," IS OUT IN AUGUST AND IT SELLS SIX MILLION COPIES! THE SINGLE "*ROCK WITH YOU*" HITS #1, AND "*DON'T STOP 'TIL YOU GET ENOUGH*" WINS A GRAMMY (THOUGH MICHAEL REPORTEDLY CRIES WHEN IT WINS ONLY **ONE**). IT'S NOW OFFICIAL--AFTER FOUR YEARS WITH NO HITS, MICHAEL IS THE COMEBACK KING OF THE DECADE!

THIS NEW HEIGHT OF FAME COMES WITH ITS OWN SET OF PROBLEMS. AS HE TELLS THE TV SHOW 20/20...

NOWADAYS, BEING AROUND EVERYDAY PEOPLE AND STUFF, I FEEL STRANGE. IT'S SOMETHING I WORK ON... BUT I'M 21 NOW. I HAVE TO FACE THE WORLD AS A GROWN-UP, AND NOT AN INSULATED KID!

THAT FIRST STEP TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE COMES WHEN HE FACES OFF WITH PAPA JOE JACKSON.

I WANT TO RUN MY OWN LIFE! YOU CAN MANAGE THE **GROUP**, BUT I'M GETTING MY OWN PERSONAL MANAGER!

THOUGH HE'S HAD FOUR MAJOR HITS FROM "*OFF THE WALL*," HE STILL FEELS INSECURE. HE MAKES AN ODD CHOICE FOR SUCH A RECOGNIZABLE PUBLIC FIGURE ... PLASTIC SURGERY. OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS, HE SHRINKS BACK HIS FLESHY NOSE, ADDS A CLEFT CHIN, AND, BY SOME **UNCONFIRMED** ACCOUNTS, HAS HIS SKIN LIGHTENED WITH DERMA-BRASION.

IN SPRING 1981, MICHAEL IS STILL LIVING AT THE FAMILY MANSION IN ENCINO, AND TOURING WITH HIS BROTHERS IN SUPPORT OF THE "TRIUMPH" LP. HIS ONSTAGE VOCAL AND PHYSICAL GYMNASTICS STEAL THE SHOW!

BACKSTAGE IN NEW ORLEANS...

Y'KNOW, MIKE, THIS FAMILY SHOULD **INCORPORATE** ITSELF! EVEN OUR SISTER LA TOYA HAS AN ALBUM OUT ON POLYDOR!

YEAH, JERMAINE, AND JANET CAN SING, DANCE **AND** ACT!*

*WE'LL DO A BOOK ON HER YET! HANG IN THERE! -TODD

BUT **YOU'RE** STILL THE STAR OF THE SHOW, EVEN IF YOU'RE NOT THE "BABY" ANY MORE.

I DON'T **ASK** FOR ALL THE PRESS. IT'S JUST THAT I'M UP FRONT, SINGING.

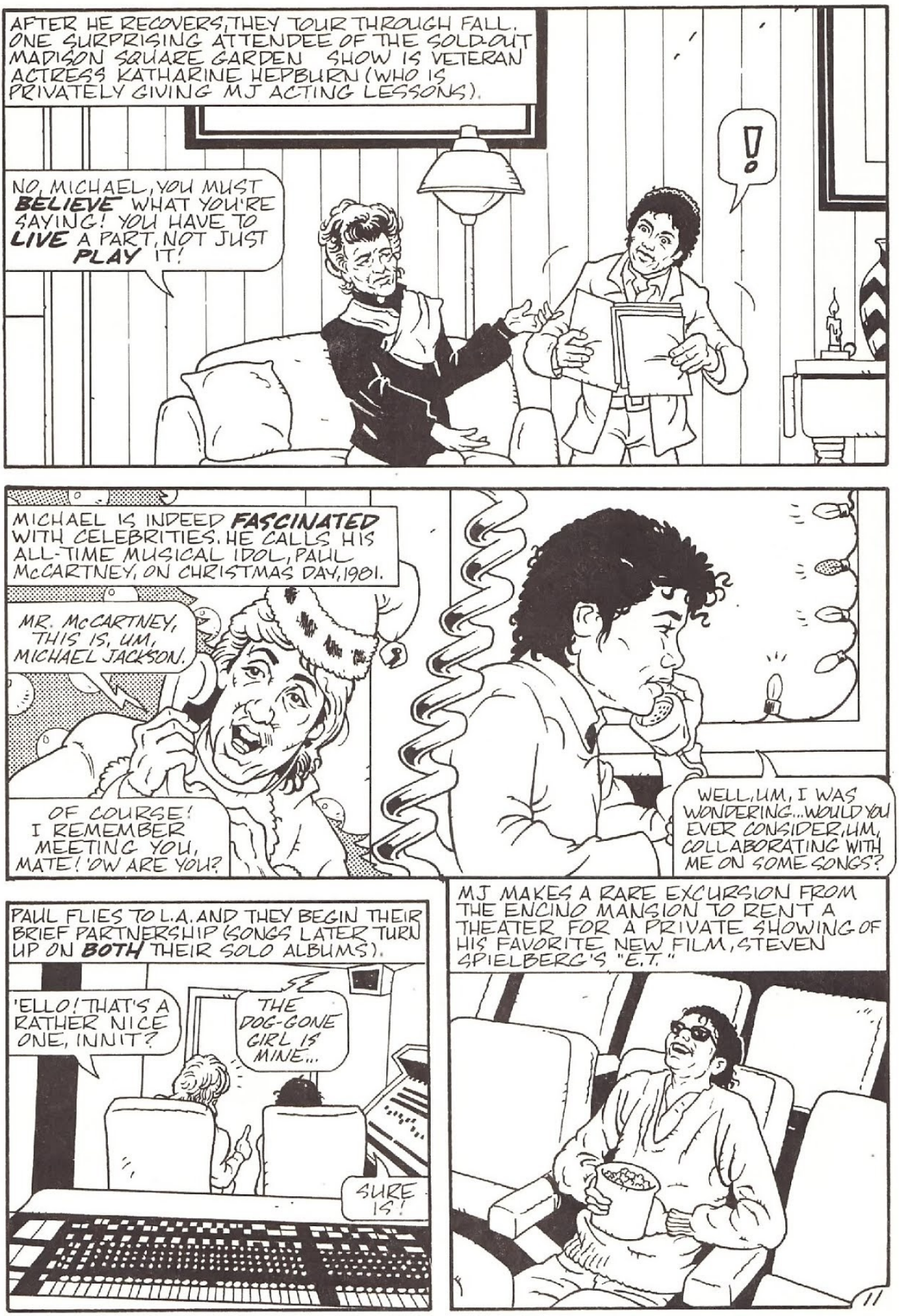
HEY, IT'S COOL. I'M NOT JEALOUS. YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY SUPERSTAR IN THE HOUSE. I'VE GOT **MY** SOLO RECORDS, EVEN THOUGH I'M NOT WITH THE GROUP ANY MORE. BREAK A LEG TONIGHT!

I JUST WISH **MY** RECORDS SOLD AS GOOD AS YOURS!

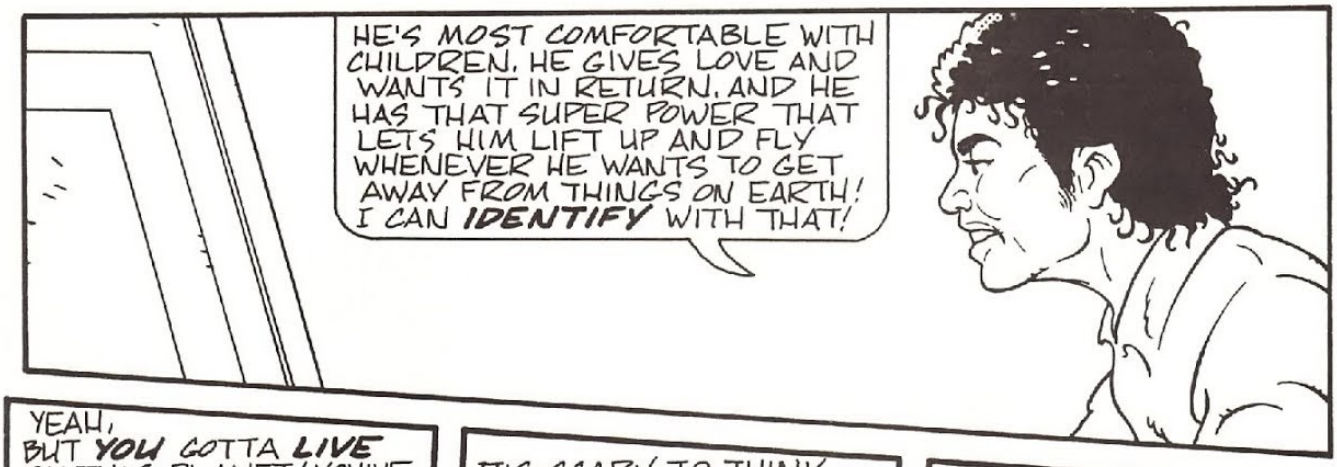
I DUNNO IF IT WAS **WORTH** YOUR COMING DOWN TO SEE US TONIGHT. I FEEL LIKE A SACK OF DOG POOP! I'VE BEEN SICK AND DIZZY ALL DAY!

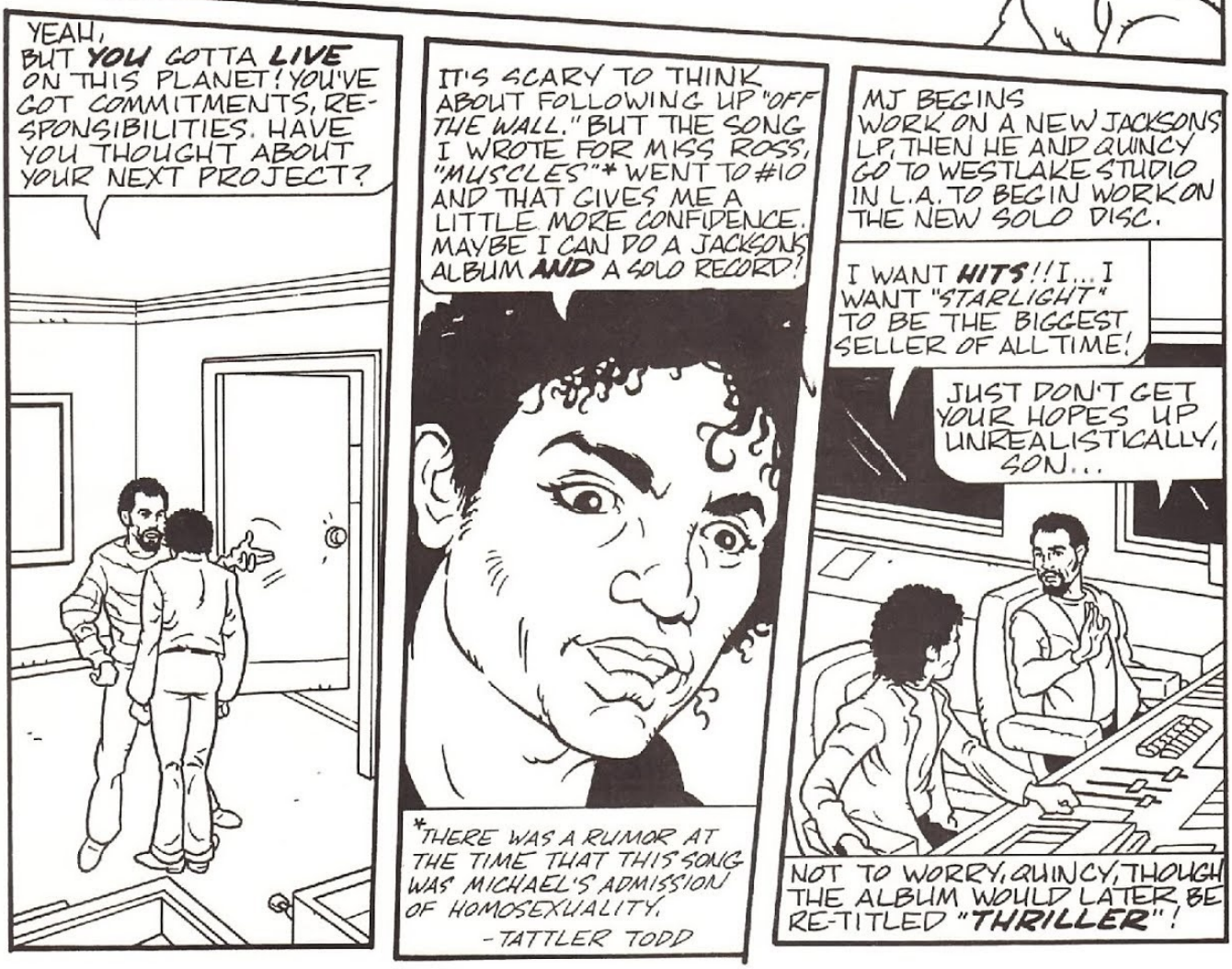
THAT EVENING, MICHAEL PASSES OUT ONSTAGE. THE DOCTORS DIAGNOSE THE PROBLEM AS EXHAUSTION.

I WAS SCARED! WHEN I WAS IN NEW YORK, STAYING AT LA TOYA'S AND FILMING "**THE WIZ**," I HAD A BLOOD VESSEL BURST IN MY LUNG! THANK GOD IT WASN'T **THAT** AGAIN!


AFTER HE RECOVERS, THEY TOUR THROUGH FALL. ONE SURPRISING ATTENDEE OF THE SOLD-OUT MADISON SQUARE GARDEN SHOW IS VETERAN ACTRESS KATHARINE HEPBURN (WHO IS PRIVATELY GIVING MJ ACTING LESSONS).
NO, MICHAEL, YOU MUST BELIEVE WHAT YOU'RE SAYING! YOU HAVE TO LIVE A PART, NOT JUST PLAY IT!
!
MICHAEL IS INDEED FASCINATED WITH CELEBRITIES. HE CALLS HIS ALL-TIME MUSICAL IDOL, PAUL McCARTNEY, ON CHRISTMAS DAY, 1981.
MR. McCARTNEY, THIS IS, UM, MICHAEL JACKSON.
OF COURSE! I REMEMBER MEETING YOU, MATE! 'OW ARE YOU?
WELL, UM, I WAS WONDERING... WOULD YOU EVER CONSIDER, UM, COLLABORATING WITH ME ON SOME SONGS?
PAUL FLIES TO L.A. AND THEY BEGIN THEIR BRIEF PARTNERSHIP (SONGS LATER TURN UP ON BOTH THEIR SOLO ALBUMS).
'ELLO! THAT'S A RATHER NICE ONE, INNIT?
THE DOG-GONE GIRL IS MINE...
SURE IS!
MJ MAKES A RARE EXCURSION FROM THE ENCINO MANSION TO RENT A THEATER FOR A PRIVATE SHOWING OF HIS FAVORITE NEW FILM, STEVEN SPIELBERG'S "E.T."
11

AS HE LATER TELLS QUINCY JONES, IN HIS OWN PRIVATE GAME ROOM, HE RELATES STRONGLY TO THE EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL.
WE'RE ALIKE, Q. HE'S IN A STRANGE PLACE AND JUST WANTS TO BE ACCEPTED.


HE'S MOST COMFORTABLE WITH CHILDREN. HE GIVES LOVE AND WANTS IT IN RETURN. AND HE HAS THAT SUPER POWER THAT LETS HIM LIFT UP AND FLY WHENEVER HE WANTS TO GET AWAY FROM THINGS ON EARTH! I CAN IDENTIFY WITH THAT!


YEAH, BUT YOU GOTTA LIVE ON THIS PLANET! YOU'VE GOT COMMITMENTS, RESPONSIBILITIES. HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT YOUR NEXT PROJECT?
IT'S SCARY TO THINK ABOUT FOLLOWING UP "OFF THE WALL." BUT THE SONG I WROTE FOR MISS ROSS, "MUSCLES"* WENT TO #10 AND THAT GIVES ME A LITTLE MORE CONFIDENCE. MAYBE I CAN DO A JACKSONS ALBUM AND A SOLO RECORD!
*THERE WAS A RUMOR AT THE TIME THAT THIS SONG WAS MICHAEL'S ADMISSION OF HOMOSEXUALITY.
-TATTLER TODD
MJ BEGINS WORK ON A NEW JACKSONS LP, THEN HE AND QUINCY GO TO WESTLAKE STUDIO IN L.A. TO BEGIN WORK ON THE NEW SOLO DISC.
I WANT HITS!! I... I WANT "STARLIGHT" TO BE THE BIGGEST SELLER OF ALL TIME!
JUST DON'T GET YOUR HOPES UP UNREALISTICALLY, SON...
NOT TO WORRY, QUINCY, THOUGH THE ALBUM WOULD LATER BE RE-TITLED "THRILLER"!

MANY, MANY MONTHS LATER...
C'MON, MIKE, THE RECORD COMPANY'S GONNA KILL US IF WE DON'T TURN THIS IN, BUT I'M BETTING THAT YOU HAVE BETTER MATERIAL!
I'M TELLING YOU, Q, I WON'T LET THE RECORD BE RELEASED UNTIL IT'S PERFECT!
I DO HAVE TWO MORE SONGS...ONE'S A ROCKER, AND THE OTHER ONE'S ABOUT, WELL, THE TYPES OF GIRLS WHO'VE PLAGUED MY FAMILY OVER THE YEARS.
BILLIE JEAN IS NOT MY LOVER...
JUST BEAT IT, BEAT IT...
"THRILLER" IS FINALLY OUT ON DECEMBER 1, 1982. YOU KNOW THE SPECS...40 MILLION COPIES SOLD OVER THE NEXT FIFTEEN MONTHS, SEVEN TOP 10 SINGLES, TWELVE GRAMMY NOMINATIONS...
GET ME EDDIE VAN HALEN! I'VE GOT A CUT HE'S GOTTA PLAY ON!*
*AND PLAY HE DOES, AS DOCUMENTED IN RNR 16! -TODD
13

THRILLER ISN'T THE **ONLY** MAJOR EVENT FOR MICHAEL IN 1983. IN JANUARY, HIS NEW FRIEND, PAUL McCARTNEY, INTRODUCES HIM TO A NEW BUSINESS ENDEAVOR.

THESE ARE ALL THE SONGS I'VE BOUGHT THE RIGHTS TO. EVEN BUDDY HOLLY'S!* I GET **PAID** EVERY TIME SOMEONE USES THEM!

WOW!!

*HE NAMED THE BEATLES AFTER BUDDY HOLLY'S GROUP, THE CRICKETS (SEE BEATLES EXPERIENCE 1). -TODD

IN FEBRUARY, THE DOUBLE RECORD/STORYBOOK "E.T. -THE EXTRATERRESTRIAL" IS OUT ON MCA.

IT'S LIKE MAGIC!

HOWEVER, HIS LABEL, EPIC, THREATENS TO SUE AND THE RECORD IS PULLED (CREATING AN INSTANT COLLECTOR'S ITEM).

THEN-FLEDGLING CABLE NETWORK, MTV REFUSES TO PLAY MICHAEL'S VIDEOS.

WE'RE NOT RACIST... WE JUST KNOW OUR **AUDIENCE** DOESN'T WANT BLACK VIDEOS!

IN MARCH, MTV FINALLY PLAYS THE "BILLIE JEAN" VIDEO... **AFTER** THE SONG HITS #1!*

*AT THE TIME MTV WAS OWNED BY WARNER, A DIRECT COMPETITOR OF MICHAEL'S LABEL, CBS/EPIC -TODD

THE $160,000 "*BEAT IT*" VIDEO, WITH ITS REAL GANGSTERS HIRED TO GAWK AT MICHAEL'S 27-ZIPPER SUIT,* MAKES THE SCENE IN APRIL (AS **THAT** SINGLE HITS #1).

*PLASTIC COPIES OF THIS JACKET SHOW UP IN STORES EVERYWHERE NATIONWIDE. -TODD

BACK HOME IN ENCINO, MJ AND SISTER JANET TAKE TIME TO CATCH UP ON SOME VIDEOS.

HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT THE **"MOTOWN 25TH ANNIVERSARY"** TV SHOW THEY'RE DOING?

UH HUH. MR. GORDY WANTS ME TO SING WITH THE GUYS, BUT I SAID NO.

YOU DID?! BUT THE LIVE ALBUM FROM THE *TRIUMPH* TOUR IS DOING SO WELL...

I'M TRYING TO ASSERT MY ***OWN*** CREATIVE PERSONALITY! I'M NOT A KID ANY MORE...

RIIIIIING!

HELLO? OH, HI, MR. GORDY. NO, I'M SORRY, I...YOU WHAT? YOU'LL LET ME SING "BILLIE JEAN" EVEN THOUGH IT'S ***NOT*** A MOTOWN SONG? OKAY, THEN I'LL DO IT!

JERMAINE REJOINS THE BROTHERS FOR A POIGNANT REUNION, BUT IT'S MICHAEL'S SOLO TURN, REPLETE WITH HIS FEDORA AND THE ***MOONWALK*** DANCE, THAT BRINGS THE HOUSE DOWN.

NOT THAT MJ ISN'T WILLING TO ***SHARE*** THE SPOTLIGHT! HIS VIDEO WITH McCARTNEY, "SAY SAY SAY" (A MINI-MOVIE ABOUT A PAIR OF TRAVELING MEDICINE SHOW CON MEN) SATURATES MTV.

THAT SUMMER, THE JACKSONS' MANAGEMENT CONTRACT WITH PAPA JOE AND THE FIRM OF WEISNER AND DEMANN IS NEARLY UP. TAKING MICHAEL'S LEAD, THEY ALLOW IT TO LAPSE. THEIR FATHER IS IRRECONCILABLE... AT FIRST. BUT FAMILY TIES ARE MORE BINDING THAN BUSINESS.

RIP

YOU'RE MY **BOYS**! I CAN'T HOLD A GRUDGE. YOU'VE ALL GROWN **BEYOND** NEEDING MY HELP ANY MORE.

IN DECEMBER 1983, MTV AIRS THE FULL-LENGTH EPIC HORROR VIDEO "**THRILLER**." A DOCUMENTARY, "THE **MAKING** OF THRILLER," WILL SOON BREAK ALL VIDEO SALES RECORDS.

BUT THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES, WITH WHOM MICHAEL HAS ALWAYS BEEN ASSOCIATED, ARE UPSET ABOUT THE WEREWOLF AND ZOMBIE ICONOGRAPHY.

I WISH TO STATE THAT, DUE TO MY STRONG PERSONAL BELIEFS AND CONVICTIONS, THIS FILM IN NO WAY ENDORSES A BELIEF IN THE OCCULT.

MICHAEL TAKES A BREAK FROM HIS FREQUENT DISNEYLAND TRIPS TO FILM A PEPSI COMMERCIAL (AND THE ROCK STAR ENDORSEMENTS BEGIN), THOUGH HE HAS THE COMPANY AGREE HE DOESN'T HAVE TO HOLD OR DRINK THE CANS (HE PREFERS CARROT JUICE).

PEPSI

HOWEVER, ON JANUARY 26, SPARKS FROM A SMOKE BOMB MAGNESIUM FLARE IGNITE HIS HAIR ON THE SET OF THE COMMERCIAL! DIRECTOR BOB GIRALDI CALLS AN AMBULANCE...

MICHAEL HAS MINOR PLASTIC SURGERY DONE FOR THE SCALP BURNS.

YOU SHOULD TAKE OFF "THE GLOVE"...

UH-UH. BY WEARING IT, I'M **NEVER** OFF STAGE!

THE CELEBRITY TEAM-UPS CONTINUE, WITH THE JUNE SINGLE "STATE OF SHOCK," FEATURING MICHAEL AND MICK JAGGER.

ALSO IN JUNE, HE'S INVITED TO THE WHITE HOUSE TO RECEIVE A PRESIDENTIAL AWARD FROM THE REAGANS.

HE ALSO GETS TO KNOW HIS FAVORITE DIRECTOR, MAGICAL MAESTRO STEVEN SPIELBERG (WITH WHOM HE WORKED ON THE E.T. STORYBOOK).

SO, MIKE, WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE BOOK?

EASY! "PETER PAN." IT OPENS WITH THE LINE, "ALL CHILDREN, EXCEPT ONE, GROW UP..."

WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN DOING A **MOVIE** OF PETER PAN?

WELL, TO BE HONEST, IT'S NOT AN IMAGE I WANT TO ENCOURAGE ANYMORE!

MJ SINGS ON ROCKWELL'S "SOMEBODY'S WATCHING ME" SINGLE (ROCKWELL IS BERRY GORDY'S SON), BUT HIS MAIN PROJECT IN THE SUMMER OF '84 IS THE JACKSONS' 40-DATE "VICTORY" TOUR. IT IS THE FIRST TIME ALL SIX BROTHERS HAVE TOURED IN EIGHT YEARS, AND WOULD BE THEIR FINAL REUNION ONSTAGE.

THINGS ARE TENSE BACKSTAGE, HOWEVER.
JERMAINE, WE'RE GETTING FLAK ABOUT THE $30 TICKETS, EVEN THOUGH IT WAS THE PROMOTER'S IDEA! I'M GOING TO DONATE MY CUT TO SOME CHILDREN'S CHARITIES.
YEAH, THIS WHOLE TOUR IS NUTS - DEATH THREATS, BAD PRESS, SCREAMING KIDS WHO WEREN'T EVEN BORN WHEN WE MADE OUR FIRST RECORD... AT LEAST WE GOT OUR STAR ON HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD!
I THINK I'M THE ONLY GUY WITH TWO STARS NOW! ONE FOR THE GROUP AND ONE FOR MY SOLOS...
I COULDA BEEN AS FAMOUS AS YOU IF MOTOWN HAD PROMOTED MY SOLO ALBUMS! IT'S ALL JUST LUCK AND TIMING ANYWAY!
YEAH, RUB IT IN! THE ONLY REASON THIS TOUR IS SELLING IS BECAUSE OF THRILLER! AND WHEN SHOWS DON'T SELL OUT, WE HAVE TO COVER THE EMPTY SEATS WITH BLACK TARP SO YOU DON'T SEE THEM AND START CRYING!
JERMAINE?!?
THERE ARE HARD FEELINGS AMONG THE BROTHERS, BUT THE RIFTS EVENTUALLY HEAL (FOR THE MOST PART).
THOUGH THE HIGH-GROSSING TOUR ENDS IN DECEMBER AT DODGER STADIUM, MIKE FINDS HIMSELF WITH TITO, RANDY, MARLON, JACKIE AND LA TOYA, SINGING ON THE #1 ALL-STAR USA FOR AFRICA BENEFIT "WE ARE THE WORLD" (MIKE AND LIONEL REPORTEDLY WROTE THE SONG IN 2½ HOURS!).
18

IN MAY 1985, EPIC PAYS MJ 50 MILLION DOLLARS IN ROYALTIES, AND HE USES SOME OF THE WINDFALL TO BUILD A REPLICA OF DISNEY'S "PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN" ...IN HIS ***LIVING*** ROOM!

NOW I DON'T HAVE TO GO "***OUT THERE***" TO ENJOY MYSELF!

DISNEY IS SO IMPRESSED WITH THE STAR'S DEVOTION THAT THEY MAKE AN UNPRECEDENTED OFFER.

YOU CAN DO ANYTHING YOU WANT FOR US! WHATEVER THE COST, WHATEVER THE PROJECT, JUST SAY THE WORD AND NAME YOUR PRICE!

DISNEY STUDIOS

I WANT TO DO A SPACE FANTASY, ABOUT ***MUSIC*** BEING ABLE TO SAVE THE WORLD! WITH, UM ...STEVEN SPIELBERG AND GEORGE LUCAS!

SPIELBERG IS BUSY, BUT FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA ("*APOCALYPSE NOW*") STEPS IN AND THE PROJECT IS A GO!

THE RESULT IS THE 15 MINUTE "*CAPTAIN EO.*" DISNEY BUILDS SPECIAL THEATERS FOR THE 3-D EXTRAVAGANZA, AND SHOWS IT ONLY AT ITS THEME PARKS. HIS FANS FLOCK TO SEE IT...

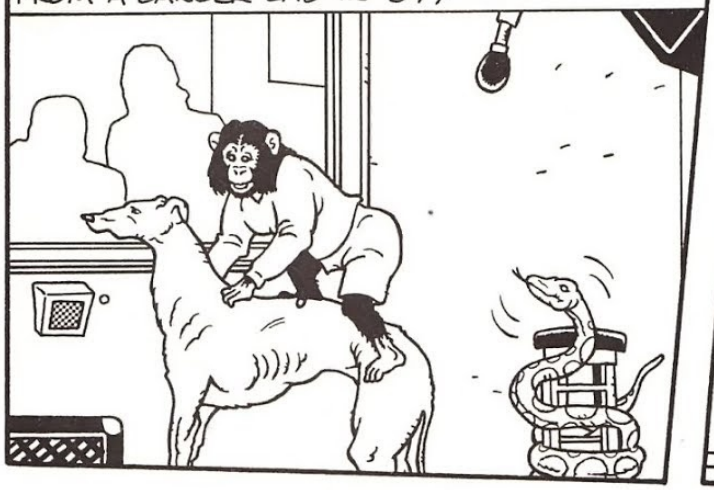
NOW SHOWING: • CAPTAIN EO • STARRING... MICHAEL JACKSON

BUT ONE ***FORMER*** FAN IS NONE TOO HAPPY WITH MICHAEL: PAUL McCARTNEY.

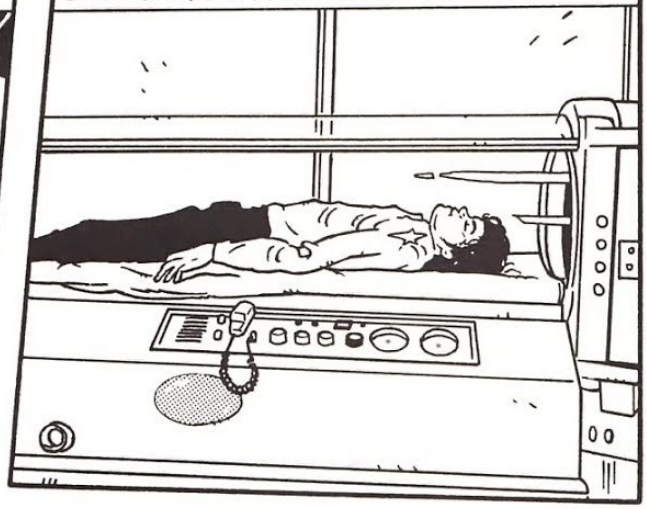
I CAN'T BELIEVE THE LI'L TWIT SECRETLY BID FOR THE ATV MUSIC PUBLISHING CATALOGUE!

YOU'RE KIDDING! YOU WERE BIDDING ON THAT! THERE'S OVER TWO HUNDRED LENNON/McCARTNEY SONGS IN THAT LOT!
YEAH, 'S A BIT OF A BACKSTAB, INNIT?
ALL THE TIME WE WERE WATCHIN' CARTOONS TOGETHER, HE WAS PUMPIN' ME FOR INFO ABOUT HOW TO BUY PUBLISHING RIGHTS!
PAUL IS EVEN MORE PISSED WHEN BEATLE SONGS, NOW OWNED BY MJ ("REVOLUTION," "GOOD DAY SUNSHINE," AND "HELP") TURN UP IN ADS FOR PRODUCTS LIKE NIKE SNEAKERS.
BUT TO MICHAEL'S NEW MASTERMIND-MANAGER, THE CARRULOUS FRANK DILEO (A FORMER EPIC RECORDS EXECUTIVE), MONEY IS THE BOTTOM LINE. MJ, PERHAPS NAIVELY, GOES ALONG WITH EVERY LICENSING SCHEME. IN MARCH 1986...
PEPSI'S OFFERING A COOL 15 MILLION TO RE-SIGN, KIDDO, AND I GOT THEM TO PAY UP FRONT! PLUS, THEY'RE SPONSORING NEXT YEAR'S TOUR!
AFTER GETTING SO BADLY BURNED BY MOTOWN, THIS IS HOW I WANT IT. ALTHOUGH ...SHOULD I FEEL GUILTY ABOUT NOT DRINKING THE PRODUCT?
NAWWWW...
LET 'EM TOSS THEIR LOOT!
OUR PROFIT MARGIN ON THE SHOWS'LL BE THE BIGGEST YET, ESPECIALLY WHEN WE CLAIM THAT IT'LL BE YOUR LAST EVER TOUR!
YEAH, BUT FIRST I GOTTA FINISH THE NEW ALBUM!

OVER THE REST OF 1986, MJ AND QUINCY JONES WEED THROUGH 60 SONGS AT WESTLAKE'S STUDIO D. HIS 300 POUND SNAKE IS THERE, AS WELL AS **BUBBLES**, THE CHIMP (RESCUED FROM A CANCER LAB IN '85).



MICHAEL ALSO TAKES TO RECLINING IN HIS INFAMOUS HYPERBARIC OXYGEN CHAMBER, A NEW AGE GIMMICK SAID TO IMPROVE SKIN, PROLONG LIFESPANS AND MAINTAIN YOUTH.



STILL, THE SHOW MUST GO ON. AS CAPTAIN EO PREMIERES AT THE DISNEY PARKS IN SEPTEMBER, MJ RECORDS A DUET WITH LONGTIME PAL STEVIE WONDER, "JUST GOOD FRIENDS."

IN NOVEMBER, HE'S SHOOTING THE "**BAD**" VIDEO IN NEW YORK, WITH MARTIN SCORCESE DIRECTING. IT ENDS UP COSTING TWO MILLION (TWICE THE ORIGINAL BUDGET, BUT EVERYONE'S USED TO THAT BY NOW!).

IT COSTS SEVERAL MILLION MORE TO DO THE **NEXT** TWO VIDEOS, "THE WAY YOU MAKE ME FEEL" AND "SMOOTH CRIMINAL."

THESE VIDS WILL TOUCHEN UP YOUR IMAGE. NO MORE SENSITIVE CRAP. WE GOT YOU LOOKIN' **FIERCE** IN ALL THAT "BAD" LEATHER AND THE AL CAPONE ZOOT SUIT IN "SMOOTH CRIMINAL."

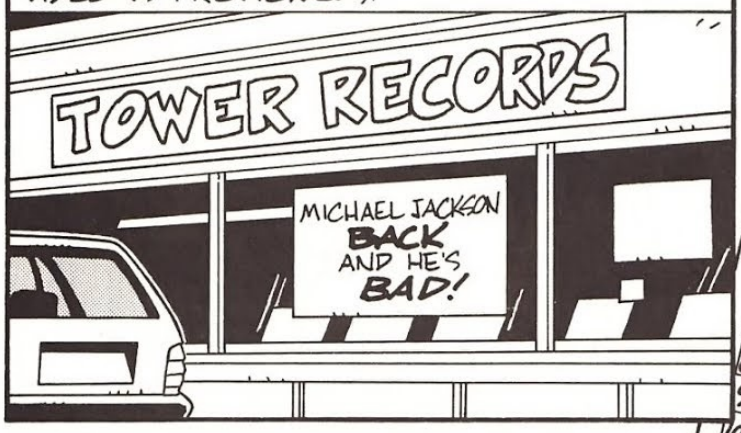
ARE WE USING THE LACE-TRIMMED PHOTO FOR THE COVER?

HELL, NO!! WE GOTTA SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT ABOUT YER SEXUALITY! YOU'RE **BAD**!

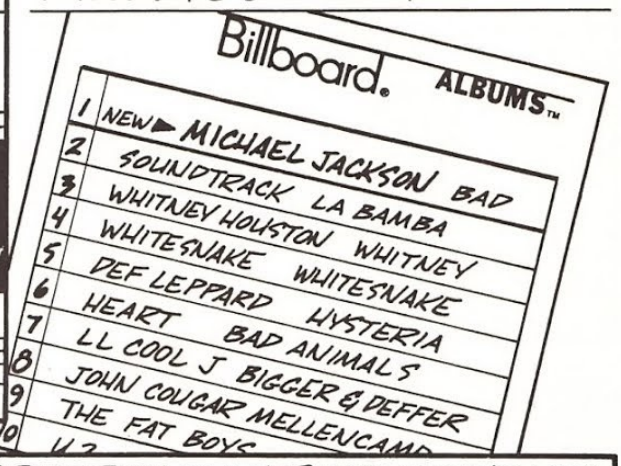
WE'VE ALREADY GOT THE PUBLICITY MACHINE CHURNING.
I HOPE IT WORKS. I WANT THE "BAD" ALBUM TO SELL 100 MILLION COPIES!
JEEZUS!! YOU'LL NEED THE CASH IF YOU KEEP DOIN' FLAKY SHIT LIKE OFFERING THAT LONDON HOSPITAL $100,000 FOR THE BONES OF JOHN MERRICK!
THEY TURNED ME DOWN, ANYWAY. IT'S A SHAME. I'M FASCINATED BY THE ELEPHANT MAN STORY! HE WAS AN OUTCAST, TOO... A SAD AND LONELY MAN, BUT ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS FIGURES IN BRITAIN!
MEANWHILE, AT HOME, MICHAEL IS TRYING TO ASSERT A LITTLE MORE CONTROL OVER HIS PERSONAL LIFE. IN JUNE '87, HE QUITS THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES AND FACES OFF WITH HIS MOTHER.
I WANT TO MOVE OUT! I'M ALMOST 30 YEARS OLD!
BUT, YOU'VE ALREADY TAKEN OVER THREE QUARTERS OF THE HOUSE AND TURNED IT INTO DISNEYLAND! A GAME ROOM, A TROPHY ROOM, THE PIRATE HALL, A PRIVATE THEATER...
BUT, MOM, I HAVE TO MAKE IT... OUT THERE!

IN JULY, FIFTY PROMINENT RECORD RETAILERS ARE INVITED TO THE JACKSON MANSION TO PREVIEW THE "BAD" LP. LA TOYA HOSTS AND BUBBLES THE CHIMP IS THE LIFE OF THE PARTY, BUT MICHAEL ONLY SHOWS UP "OUT THERE" FOR A BRIEF MOMENT OF POSED PUBLICITY PHOTOS.

IN AUGUST, THE FIRST SINGLE IS OUT, "*I CAN'T STOP LOVING YOU.*" RETAILERS ARE SALIVATING LIKE PAVLOV'S POOCH FOR THE NEW LP AS CBS AIRS THE TV SPECIAL "*MICHAEL JACKSON: THE MAGIC RETURNS!*" (WHERE THE "BAD" VIDEO IS PREVIEWED).

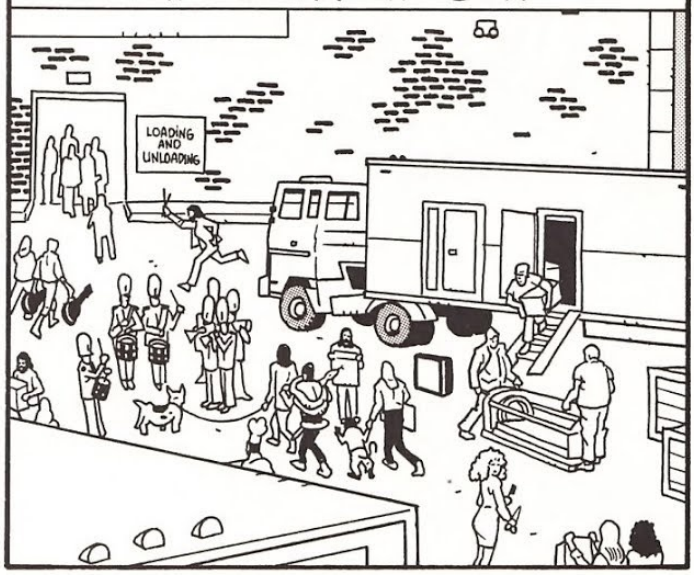


THE RECORD DEBUTS AT #1, WITH THE BIGGEST PRE-SHIP ORDERS EVER PLACED! MUSICIANS ARE HURRIEDLY HIRED FOR THE SUPPORT TOUR (THOUGH THEY'RE REQUIRED TO SIGN A NON-DISCLOSURE CONTRACT).



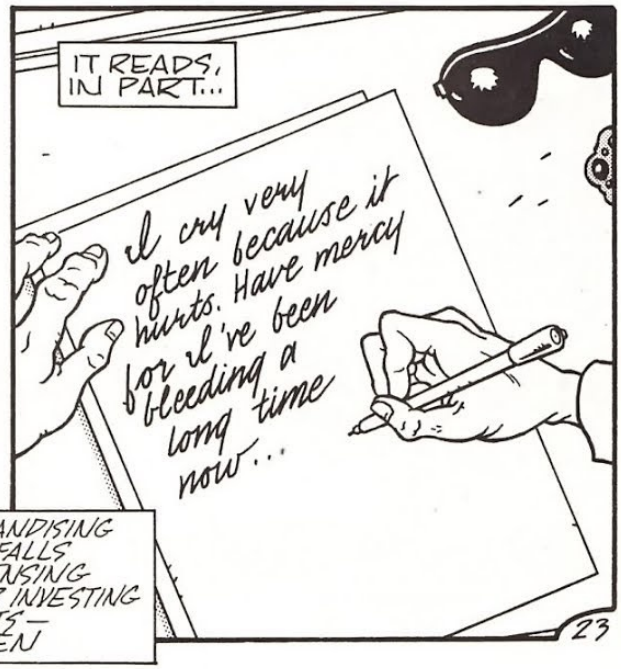
THE CONCERTS BEGIN IN JAPAN, WHERE MICHAEL IS TREATED LIKE VISITING ROYALTY. HE GOES TO AMUSEMENT PARKS (WHICH SHUT DOWN TO THE PUBLIC TO ENTERTAIN HIM), AND GIVES TRUCKLOADS OF TICKETS TO HANDICAPPED JAPANESE KIDS.

THE ROAD TRIP IS A VERITABLE TRAVELLING CIRCUS! 250 PEOPLE AND PETS, INCLUDING A CHEF, HAIRDRESSERS, ROADIES, PERSONAL MANAGERS, ADVISORS, DOCTORS, SECURITY, AND VARIOUS PETS.



STILL, MICHAEL IS DEPRESSED IN JAPAN. THE PREVIOUS YEAR'S FAILED PROJECTS HAUNT HIM: THE CLOTHES LINE, "MICHAEL'S FRIENDS" STUFFED TOYS, THE MAGIC BEAT PERFUME, AND THE RELENTLESS TABLOID "EXPOSÉS."* HE COMPOSES A PUBLIC PLEA FOR HELP ON THE BACK OF HOTEL STATIONARY.

IT READS, IN PART...



*IN FACT, THE ENTIRE MERCHANDISING BUSINESS FAILS TO FLY AND FALLS FLAT IN AMERICA. MANY LICENSING COMPANIES GO UNDER AFTER INVESTING EVERYTHING IN MJ PRODUCTS—
TODD "I WAS THERE" LOREN

I MISS ALL MY PETS! THEY'RE SO MUCH EASIER TO GET ALONG WITH THAN PEOPLE! ALL THEY WANT IS LOVE, AND ***THAT'S*** WHAT I WANT MOST TO GIVE! IT'S THE SAME WITH CHILDREN...

I WISH THE WHOLE ***WORLD*** WAS NOTHING BUT ANIMALS AND CHILDREN...

THE "BAD" SINGLE HITS #1, FOLLOWED BY THE "MESSAGE" SONG "MAN IN THE MIRROR," BUT STILL THE TABLOIDS (AND EVEN SOME ***REPUTABLE*** RAGS LIKE ***PEOPLE*** AND ***TIME***) TAKE THEIR SHOTS.

IMPLYER

GRADE SCHOOL BRIDE

JACKSON WANTS SEX CHANGE

THEY SAY I TAKE FEMALE HORMONES TO KEEP MY VOICE HIGH, TALK ABOUT ME BATHING IN EVIAN WATER AND SUPPOSEDLY GOING IN FOR RADICAL PLASTIC SURGERY... WHY WON'T THEY ***LEAVE ME ALONE!!!***

NATIONAL IMPLYER

HE SUCCINCTLY EXPRESSES THAT VERY SENTIMENT IN THE TOUR-DE-FORCE VIDEO "LEAVE ME ALONE."

BUT, STILL, HE'S A SLAVE TO BUSINESS CONCERNS. IN SPRING 1988...

SO THE U.S. TOUR STARTS IN ATLANTA NEXT WEEK?

UH, NO, NOT ANY MORE.

?!?!?!

WELL, PEPSI CALLED. ATLANTA IS THE HOME OFFICE OF COCA-COLA, SO PEPSI WON'T LET US OPEN THERE!

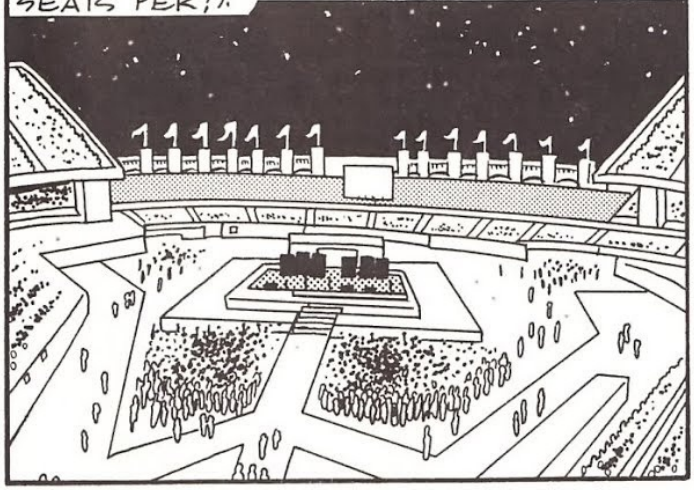
:SIGH:

THERE'S NO ESCAPING MJ IN '88. IN MARCH, HIS SELLOUT NEW YORK CONCERTS AT THE GARDEN MAKE HEADLINES (THE BENEFIT SHOWS RAISE $500,000 FOR THE UNITED NEGRO COLLEGE FUND), AND HE EVEN POPS UP DUETING WITH STEVIE WONDER ON "GET IT," FROM WONDER'S "***CHARACTERS***" LP.

IN JUNE, HIS "***MOONWALK***" AUTOBIOGRAPHY IS OUT (MOSTLY GHOSTWRITTEN, BUT EXPRESSING HIS THOUGHTS AND SENTIMENTS PRECISELY), PROVIDING RARE QUOTABLE QUOTES FOR THE GRIST MILLS SINCE HIS INTERVIEWS ARE SO RARE.

IN JULY, THE ODE TO GROUPIEDOM "*DIRTY DIANA*," IS THE FIFTH #1 SINGLE FROM "***BAD***," THIS ONE FEATURING THE AXE-SLINGING OF BILLY IDOL'S GUITARIST, ***STEVE STEVENS***.

HE ALSO MAKES IT TO ENGLAND TO HOB-NOB WITH ROYALTY ONCE AGAIN (HE'D PERFORMED FOR THE QUEEN WITH THE JACKSON FIVE), AS PRINCE CHARLES AND LADY DI ATTEND ONE OF HIS WEMBLEY ARENA SHOWS (HE SELLS OUT SEVEN NIGHTS, 72,000 SEATS PER!).



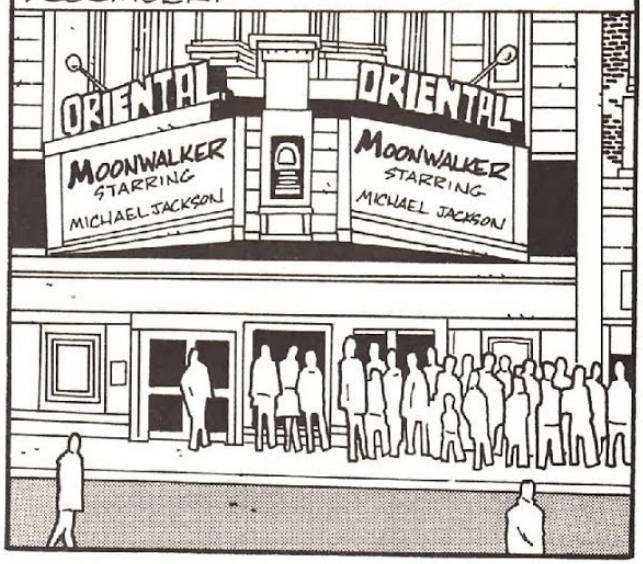
BUT EVEN THE $100,000 HE DONATES TO THE PRINCE'S TRUST CHARITY FUND DOESN'T HELP GET BUBBLES THROUGH THE STRICT U.K. QUARANTINE. THE CHIMP IS HELD AT CUSTOMS FOR THE DURATION OF THE BRITISH TOUR.

IN THE FALL, AS "ANOTHER PART OF ME" PEAKS AT #11, MICHAEL BURIES THE HATCHET WITH FORMER MENTOR, BERRY GORDY, JR.

I KNOW WE'VE HAD OUR DIFFERENCES, BUT I'D LIKE TO DONATE $125,000 TO THE MOTOWN MUSEUM.

THIS MEANS A LOT TO ME, SON!

IN NOVEMBER, THE SEVENTH "BAD" SINGLE IS OUT, "SMOOTH CRIMINAL." THE VIDEO IS A FEATURED SEGMENT IN THE "**MOONWALKER**" FILM, OUT IN THEATERS IN DECEMBER.



MJ ALSO ACCEPTS AN ACHIEVEMENT TROPHY AT THE AMERICAN MUSIC AWARDS THE PRESENTER IS EDDIE MURPHY (WHOSE ACT OFTEN POKES GOOD-NATURED FUN AT MICHAEL).

EDDIE, COULD YOU PULL UP THE MICROPHONE STAND FOR ME?

OH, SURE...

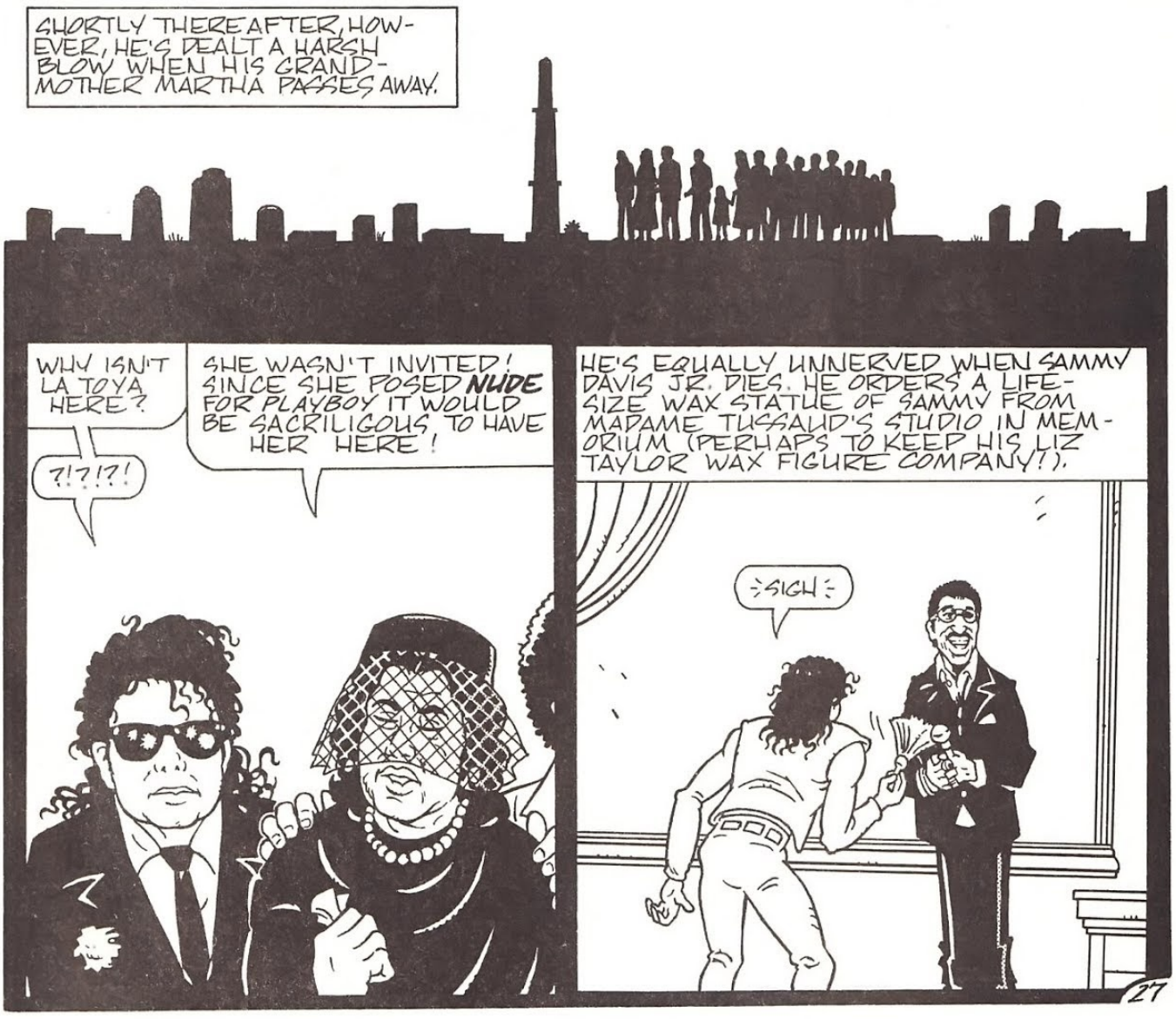
HEH, HEH! HEY, FOLKS, HE SAID, "EDDIE, PULL IT UP," LIKE I WAS **WORKIN'** FOR HIM! AN' I STARTED TO **DO** IT, TOO!*

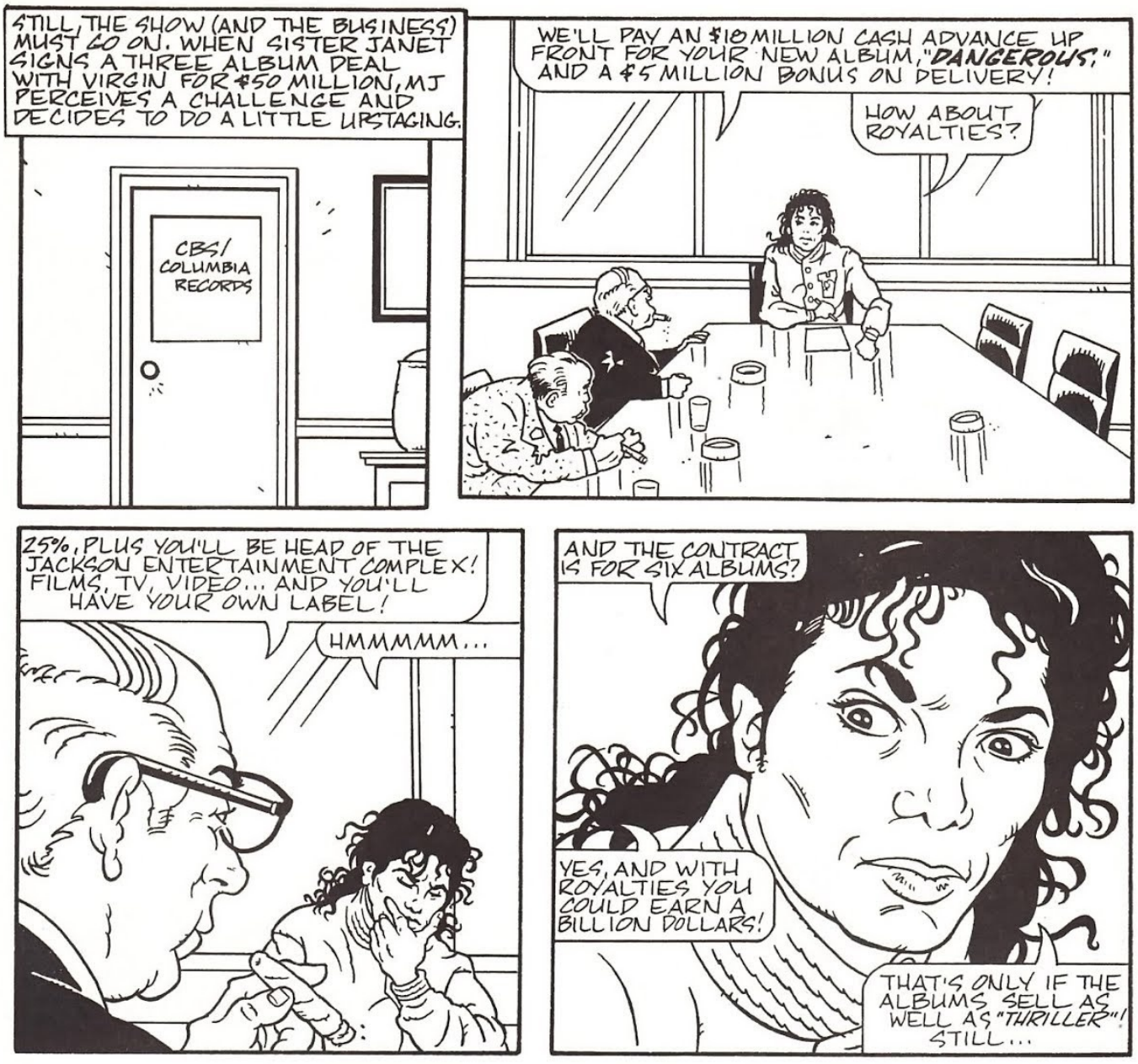
*YOU'D THINK MICHAEL, OF ALL PEOPLE, WOULD KNOW HOW TO ADJUST A MICROPHONE. -SMART-ASS TODD

BY FEBRUARY 1989, "MOONWALKER" IS ALREADY OUT ON VIDEO, AND THE CASSETTE BREAKS ALL PREVIOUS SALES RECORDS. HOW CAN YOU NOT LOVE THE SCENE WHERE MJ TURNS INTO A GIANT TRANSFORMER ROBOT OR IS ANIMATED IN CLAY-MATION BY WILL "CALIFORNIA RAISINS" VINTON?! HOWEVER, THERE ARE PROBLEMS **BEHIND** THE SCENES, WITH MANAGER FRANK DILEO.

SOME OF THE SCHEMES YOU'VE COME UP WITH REEK OF, I DON'T KNOW ...EXCESS!

THE GUY WHO BID ON THE ELEPHANT MAN'S BONES TELLS ME ABOUT EXCESS?!? DON'T BE SO UNGRATEFUL! HAVEN'T I MADE YOU THE MOST TALKED-ABOUT CELEBRITY OF THE CENTURY?
YEAH, BUT AT WHAT EXPENSE? YOU SOUND LIKE BERRY GORDY. COLONEL TOM PARKER DID THE SAME FOR ELVIS, BUT LOOK WHAT IT DID FOR HIS CREDIBILITY!
SO WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
WELL, UM, I'M GETTING A NEW PERSONAL MANAGER, FRANK...
THUS MICHAEL FINALLY AND TRULY GROWS UP!


SHORTLY THEREAFTER, HOWEVER, HE'S DEALT A HARSH BLOW WHEN HIS GRANDMOTHER MARTHA PASSES AWAY.
WHY ISN'T LA TOYA HERE?
?!?!?!
SHE WASN'T INVITED! SINCE SHE POSED NUDE FOR PLAYBOY IT WOULD BE SACRILIGOUS TO HAVE HER HERE!
HE'S EQUALLY UNNERVED WHEN SAMMY DAVIS JR. DIES. HE ORDERS A LIFE-SIZE WAX STATUE OF SAMMY FROM MADAME TUSSAUD'S STUDIO IN MEMORIUM (PERHAPS TO KEEP HIS LIZ TAYLOR WAX FIGURE COMPANY!).
:SIGH:


STILL, THE SHOW (AND THE BUSINESS) MUST GO ON. WHEN SISTER JANET SIGNS A THREE ALBUM DEAL WITH VIRGIN FOR $50 MILLION, MJ PERCEIVES A CHALLENGE AND DECIDES TO DO A LITTLE UPSTAGING.
CBS/ COLUMBIA RECORDS
WE'LL PAY AN $10 MILLION CASH ADVANCE UP FRONT FOR YOUR NEW ALBUM, "DANGEROUS," AND A $5 MILLION BONUS ON DELIVERY!
HOW ABOUT ROYALTIES?
25%, PLUS YOU'LL BE HEAD OF THE JACKSON ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX! FILMS, TV, VIDEO... AND YOU'LL HAVE YOUR OWN LABEL!
HMMMMM...
AND THE CONTRACT IS FOR SIX ALBUMS?
YES, AND WITH ROYALTIES YOU COULD EARN A BILLION DOLLARS!
THAT'S ONLY IF THE ALBUMS SELL AS WELL AS "THRILLER"! STILL...
OKAY, I'LL SIGN!
Stan Yellen © 1991
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STILL, ALL WORK AND NO PLAY WOULD BE DULL INDEED, SO MICHAEL STEPS OUT FOR THE OSCAR CEREMONIES WITH HIS SURPRISE DATE, MADONNA (THE ETHEREAL BOY MEETS THE MATERIAL GIRL!).
AFTERWARD, THE UNLIKELY DUO MAKES THE SCENE AT THE TRADITIONAL SPAGO'S PARTY.
THIS IS FUN! I LOVE THE WAY THE PAPPA-RAZZI STARED AT US!
WHAT DO YOU EXPECT? YOU'RE WITH ME!
OH, LOOK! THERE'S MY SWEETIE, WARREN BEATTY! EXCUSE ME, KID, I GOTTA GO OVER AND TUG HIS LEG FOR AWHILE... ONE OF 'EM, ANYWAY... HAH!
I MIGHT AS WELL GO HOME AND PLAY SUPER MARIO BROTHERS! EVEN THO' SOME OF MY FAVORITE CELEBRITIES ARE HERE, I DON'T FEEL...COMFORTABLE.
EXCUSE ME, MAY I SIT WITH YOU?
WHY, UH... MISS ROSS! WOW, AM I GLAD TO SEE YOU!
DIANA ENDS UP PERCHED ON MICHAEL'S LAP AS THEY FONDLY REMINISCE.
SO, HOW COME YOU TOLD THAT REPORTER THAT I'M YOUR FRIEND, MOTHER AND LOVER!
WELL, DIANA, YOU ARE... KINDA, AREN'T YOU?
29

AND SO THE WORLD AWAITS THE "***DANGEROUS***" LP. HOPEFULLY, MICHAEL JACKSON WILL NEVER FULLY RETIRE INTO HIS HAND-BUILT, INSULAR GRACELAND (HE CALLS HIS NEW SPREAD, HOPE-FULLY IN JEST, "***NEVERLAND RANCH***"). HIS MUSIC AND MAGIC HAVE TOUCHED PEOPLE ALL OVER THE WORLD AND IT WOULD BE A SHAME FOR HIM TO WITHDRAW THAT STELLAR TALENT FROM THE STAGNANT GENE POOL OF THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY. STILL, HE'S ***EARNED*** HIS ECCENTRICITIES. IF MICHAEL JACKSON RETIRED TODAY TO JUST COUNT HIS MONEY AND PLAY VIDEO GAMES AND WATCH THE THREE STOOGES, HE WOULD STILL GO DOWN IN HISTORY AS ONE OF THE MOST TALENTED PERFORMERS THAT THE WORLD HAS EVER BEEN LUCKY ENOUGH TO KNOW!

FOR MIKE WILLIS

(Continued) which I think you should be aware of. I was referred to you by Mr. Levitz who is vice president of DC Comics, he seems to feel that you're the person to talk to , I hope that you are.

[I then went over our whole history with Great Southern, how they threatened our distributors and blackmailed us into agreeing not to do any books on certain groups]

PH: Well, there's a limited amount that we can do, assuming that we're going to bat in this thing at all, and that's an assumption I'm not prepared to make , but , except for purposes of this phone call. The people who are affected are not Time Warner, but artists that are under contract to us, and it is their interests that are primarily involved. Whether and the extent to which they will be responsive to any encouragement from Time Warner...I don't know, and I suspect different artists would act differently. I don't think we have rights to give out here. The one thing I feel quite confident is in the right is DC Comics, so I can see why Levitz said "This is not my department"...and he's right, there's not much he can do...(It's) easy enough for me to find out a little bit about whether the record company has an interest in this, and would go to bat to seek approvals or even to recommend that it's artists give you this kind of approval-

TL: We're not asking for approval. We don't want approval. We just want our First Amendment rights. We want to be out from under this coercion that's all.

PH: Well, who's coercing you?

TL:Great Southern.

PH: Well I don't have anything to do with Great Southern.

TL: Well yes you do. Because you own the contracts to certain recording artists that are licensed to Great Southern.

PH:...I'm not oppressing you in any way, Mr. Loren, you seem to think we're under some obligation to intercede on your behalf when-

TL: Well I think you are when one of your vice presidents of one of your companies goes around saying that Time Warner is a firm believer in the First Amendment, and has done great things for the First Amendment, when you have people like that saying those things, yes I do think you're obligated to some degree...

PH: Could you tell me exactly what you think we ought to do in this circumstance?

TL: Well, I think you should make darn sure that Great Southern is aware that you don't like the idea of what they're doing. Unless you do like the idea of what they're doing...

PH: Uh, I don't know. I have no idea what they're doing except that they are discouraging people from distributing your magazine.

TL: "Discouraging" is putting it rather mildly.

PH: I don't know what's in your magazine. People are privileged under the First Amendment to put out things that are disgusting, often untrue, often go beyond the fringe of libel or defamation, I'm not suggesting your publications are any of these things, but clearly they have been offensive to some of the people that are involved.

TL:They're offensive because they want...to be able to control the likenesses and names of public figures which are not in their power to control because as a public figure they have given up their right to privacy, and as such the press can report about them.

PH: I would find myself better educated, better informed, as to what, if anything we ought to do about this if I saw a couple copies of your magazine.

TL: Well, that's what I've been waiting to hear. I've been waiting to hear some interest on your part as to what the actual content is, and I'd be more than happy to send you those.

PH: If you did that I'd be happy to look at them, and it would put me in a much better position to respond. We do believe strongly in First Amendment rights, but I also think that before we go and promote anybody, or assist anybody, there's some obligation on our part to know what we're talking about.

TL: I think you'll find that it's purely biographical, and there's some satirical material in it-

PH: We put out Mad magazine-

TL: I know. The Skid Row book was never put out, but I can send you the Bon Jovi book, which is another one that we are not allowed to publish, and that will give you an idea...

PH: I'd like to see several of them.

Then he gave me the address to send them to, which is Time Warner Inc., 75 Rockefeller Plaza, NY, NY 10019. It's been over a month, and no response. There's the address folks, his name is Peter Haje, maybe you can have better luck than I. Peace.

PULL THE PLUGS!

Coming up in August and September...

ROCK N' ROLL COMICS

___35- R.E.M.
___36-Michael Jackson (Duh!)
___37-Ice T ___38- Rod Stewart
___PINK FLOYD EXPERIENCE 3
___BEATLES EXPERIENCE 5
___CONSPIRACY COMICS 1
___BASEBALL SUPERSTARS 1
___SEXPOT 1 (Adults only!)

FUTUREPLAN

Coming in October...

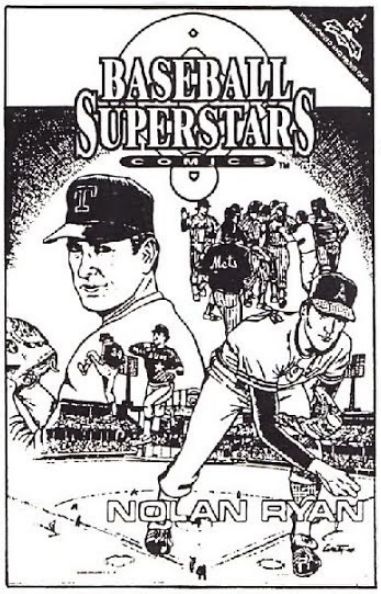
ROCK N' ROLL COMICS

___39-The Fall Of The New Kids
___40-N.W.A/ Ice Cube
___CONTEMPORARY BIO-GRAPHICS 1 (About Stan Lee)
___PINK FLOYD EXPERIENCE 4
___PINEAPPLE PERFUME 1 (Adults Only!)

November...

___RNR 41- Paula Abdul

JOIN THE REVOLUTION!



BASEBALL SUPERSTARS COMICS 1

BASEBALL SUPERSTARS 1

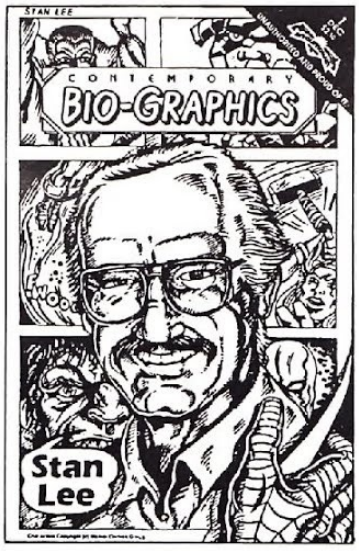
Featuring the story of NOLAN RYAN- ships in September!

PINEAPPLE PERFUME 1

PINEAPPLE PERFUME 1

From our adult imprint, CARNAL COMICS, this is the essential book of fabulous babes! Adults only! October.

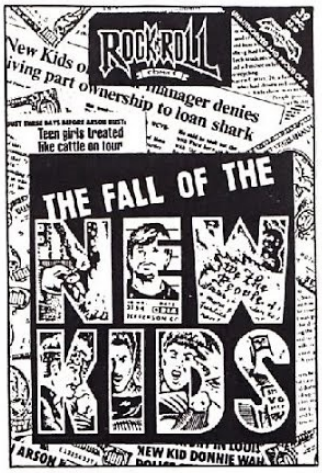
CARNAL COMICS



CONTEMPORARY BIO-GRAPHICS 1

CONTEMPORARY BIO-GRAPHICS 1

Featuring the story of Stan (the Man) Lee, Publisher of Marvel! Face front, true believers, it ships in October!



ROCK N' ROLL COMICS 39

ROCK N' ROLL COMICS 39

THE FALL OF THE NEW KIDS- Some people thought we couldn't publish this. THEY WERE WRONG! October.

HEAVY METAL MONSTERS 1

HEAVY METAL MONSTERS 1

An anthology of madness, mayhem and metal, rock n' roll dreams...and nightmares! November.

ELVIS SHRUGGED 1

ELVIS SHRUGGED 1

1997: Is Elvis Alive? Madonna wants to find out! She gets help from a bionic Frank Sinatra and...you'll see the rest in November! Part 1 of 3

DAVE GARCIA, artist

COMMITTED TO EXPANDING THE HORIZONS OF COMICS AS ART AND COMMUNICATION

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